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ABSTRACT

Parents of a group of first graders knew very little about the whole-language approach to reading employed in their children's classroom and were consequently unable to help their children as they learned to read. A program was implemented to provide parents in a target group with an understanding of the whole-language approach to reading as well as to provide strategies to use at home with their children. Secondary objectives of the program included increased mastery of first-grade skills for the students and a high level of enjoyment by parents and students as a result of the program. The program involved the parents and their children in 10 weeks of daily, whole-language activities, and parents participated in an orientation, conferences, and a final parent meeting. An initial and final parent survey, a language arts/reading checklist, a student survey, and an activities log were used to measure the effectiveness of the program. Results indicated that parental understanding and use of whole-language strategies exceeded the predicted positive outcomes. Students in the group significantly improved in skill mastery, and both parents and children were able to work and learn together in a positive setting, thus improving parent-student-teacher relations. (Eleven appendices contain samples of the project surveys and program materials.) (TJQ)

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IMPROVING PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN A FIRST GRADE CLASSROOM THROUGH THE USE OF WHOLE LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES

by

Elizabeth J. Hooper

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A Practicum Report

Submitted to the Faculty of the Center for Advancement of Education of Nova University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science.

The abstract of this report may be placed in a National Database System for reference.

February/1994

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ABSTRACT

Improving Parent Involvement in a First Grade Classroom Through the Use of Daily Whole Language Activities.
Hooper, Elizabeth J., 1994: Practicum Report, Nova University, The Center for the Advancement of Education.
Descriptors: First Grade/ Kindergarten Children/ Learning Activities/ Oral Language/ Parent Participation/ Primary Education/ Reading/ Whole Language/

The problem identified in this first grade classroom was that parents knew very little about the Whole Language Approach to Reading and were consequently unable to help their children learn to read adequately. The aim of this program was to provide parents in the target group with an understanding of the Whole Language Approach to Reading as well as to provide strategies to use at home with their children. Secondary objectives of the program included increased mastery of first grade skills for the student population and to derive a high level of enjoyment by both the parent and student populations as a result of program activities. Elements of the program involved the parent and child populations in 10 weeks of daily whole language activities. Other components of the project involved parents in an orientation, conferences and a final parent meeting. An Initial and Final Parent Survey, the Language Arts/Reading Checklist, Student Survey, and an Activities Log were used to measure the effectiveness of the program. Results indicated that parental understanding and use of whole language strategies exceeded the predicted outcomes. Appendices include activities used in weekly plans, measurement devices and the Language Arts/Reading Checklist Bar Graph.

Authorship Statement

I hereby testify that this paper and the work it reports are entirely my own. Where it has been necessary to draw from the work of others, published or unpublished, I have acknowledged such work in accordance with accepted scholarly and editorial practice. I give this testimony freely, out of respect for the scholarship of other workers in the field and in the hope that my work, presented here, will earn similar respect.

Elizabeth J. Hooper
student's signature

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Practicum Title Improving Parent Involvement in a First Grade Classroom Through the Use of Daily Whole Language Activities

Student's Name Elizabeth J. Hooper

Program Site Miami Date February 1994

Observer's Name Monica Trujillo
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Observer's position Grade Chairperson Phone #_____

Observer's comment on impact of the project (handwritten):

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CHAPTER I

Purpose

This practicum was implemented in an elementary school situated in a rapidly growing area of a large metropolitan city. The target school was in a predominately Anglo community with an increasing number of Hispanic students and a moderate but increasing number of Black students. A variety of shopping malls, shopping centers, professional buildings and businesses were in the area. Individual homes and high density dwellings existed in the area and new homes were continually under construction creating constant change. The neighborhood was one of middle to upper middle class socioeconomic status.

The target school was in its fourth year of operation and serviced pre-kindergarten through the fifth grades. Total school enrollment was 1068 students. The school was originally built to house 850 students. Approximately 54 percent of the students were Hispanic, 33.5 percent White, 6.9 percent Black and 4.8 percent were Asian. There were 41 full time classroom teachers, 18 special teachers, 11 support staff personnel, three administrators, 7 office and clerical workers and 12 custodial and cafeteria workers. Out of the 1068 students, 222 students received free lunch, 70 received reduced lunch.

Three philosophies that were important to this project are outlined in the target school's proposal. They include; first, School Based Management and Shared Decision Making (SBM/SDM). The purpose of SBM/SDM at the target school was to enhance the quality of instructional services, to encourage parent and community involvement in the educational process and to increase professionalism by encouraging staff participation in the school's decision making process.

Second, an integrated language arts instruction was used as the predominate academic program for kindergarten through fifth grades which uses the Whole Language Approach. Integrating the language arts involves the use of language arts activities such as reading, listening, viewing, writing and speaking and integrates this program with the total curriculum. The total curriculum involves the language arts field as well as science, social studies, health and safety. The whole language aspect of the philosophy maintains that by using a wide variety of literature to increase the students reading, writing, listening and speaking skills, children's needs, interests, abilities and the curriculum goals will be met.

Last, the target site consisted of three "multiage" groups. Initial placement in a group was by grade level and learning style. Group I included kindergarten and first grade. Group II

included second and third grades and Group III consisted of the fourth and fifth grades. These groups were unique in that students remained with the same teachers during their two year stay in the group. This enabled teachers, parents, counselors and students to become more comfortable and to foster meaningful relationships. Other benefits of the groups included familiarity with teachers and classmates when yearly grade changes occured. Teachers also become mentors for their students.

This writer is certified in Early Childhood Education as well as Elementary Education. This writer has taught two years of kindergarten and one year of first grade at this particular site. The focus in the classroom was on integrating the language arts and on the Whole Language Approach to Reading. Prior to teaching at this site, this writer taught three and one-half years of kindergarten at an inner-city school in the north-west section of the same metropolitan city. This writer had an opportunity at the inner-city school to observe how little or no parent involvement has a negative effect on students' learning. Responsibilities of the writer include teaching a group of students kindergarten as well as first grade. The classroom was self-contained and focused on an integrated curriculum using the Whole Language Approach to Reading. This writer was responsible for structuring lessons in reading, writing, listening and speaking as well as mathematics, the content areas, music and

physical education so that students could master the content and skill objectives designated by the target school's county.

The problem identified in this first grade classroom was that parents knew very little about the Whole Language Approach to Reading and were consequently unable to help their children learn to read adequately.

The Whole Language Approach to Reading was a relatively new concept in reading. The target site had developed workshops using educators from the county as well as prominent national educators selected for their expertise in the Whole Language Approach to deliver extensive inservice training to staff members. Staff members could also attend workshops and purchase whole language materials at their own expense. Unfortunately, there was no extensive inservice training for parents. Additionally, there was very little literature on the market to help parents understand the process of the Whole Language Approach to Reading.

Cutting (1989) suggests that parents want to help their children learn to read but most do not know what they can do. Schools can help by showing parents specific ways to help children learn to read successfully. Parents were provided with a brief overview of the Whole Language Approach to Reading at the target site's annual open house. Many teachers even purchased pamphlets on the Whole Language Approach to hand out to parents

to assist in their understanding of the program. As evidenced by the Colleague Survey (Appendix A:36) and the Parent Survey (Appendix B:38), a brief overview and a pamphlet are not enough to involve parents adequately in their child's reading program.

To show support for the problem statement, 13 kindergarten and first grade teachers at the target site were asked to complete a Colleague Survey (Appendix A:36). The survey results indicated that parents rarely asked about the method used to teach their children how to read. When parents did ask, it was generally at open house or in a parent-teacher conference when the student was not performing satisfactorily. Parent's general attitude toward the Whole Language Approach was one of skepticism. The major concern being the use of invented spelling. Parents also wanted to know "when will my child learn to read?" All 13 teachers agreed that reading progress in their classroom would improve significantly if parents understood the whole language approach and became actively involved with their children using whole language activities at home. Twelve teachers concur that parents do not have an understanding of the Whole Language Approach to Reading.

A Parent Survey (Appendix B:38) was sent home with students from the target classroom. Twenty-five surveys were distributed, 17 surveys were returned. The results of the survey show support for the problem statement. In response to how often parents

read to their children, only two out of the 17 parents surveyed said they read to their children every day. Eight parents said they read to their children more than three times a week. Fifteen parents agree that there is a direct relationship between their child's success and the amount of time spent reading to their child. Only two parents responded that there was no relationship. Twelve parents showed a concern about invented spelling, three parents were not concerned about their child's invented spelling and two marked the choice "I don't know". Out of the 17 parent's participating in the survey, 12 felt satisfied with their child's reading progress. Nine of the 12 parents expressed a desire to learn how to further their child's literacy learning. All five parents who said they were not satisfied with their child's reading progress expressed a desire to learn how to further their child's literacy learning. A unanimous response was given when asked if it would be helpful to the parent if they had a better understanding of how their child was learning to read. Most parents saw their role in helping their child learn to read successfully as, reading at home or helping their child with homework. Sixteen parents responded favorably to working with their child's teacher using whole language materials at home. Ten of the 16 said they were interested no matter what was involved, five were interested provided the activities did not require more than 15 minutes a day. The results of the colleague

(Appendix A:36) and parent surveys (Appendix B:38) along with this writer's observations demonstrated a need to develop a whole language program which would involve parents in their child's literacy learning.

For the purposes of this practicum project, the target group consisted of 10 parents and their children selected from the Parent Survey (Appendix B:38) population. Five parents and their children were chosen from the group responding that they were satisfied with their child's reading progress and expressed a desire to further their child's literacy learning. All five parents and their children who were not satisfied with their child's reading progress and expressed a desire to further their child's literacy learning were included in this project. Within the student population of the target group, there were seven boys and three girls ranging in ages six years three months to seven years. Six of the students were White three of the students were Hispanic and one student was Asian. One student had limited English proficiency and received 30 minute daily classes in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) daily. Within the parent population of the target group, the ethnic groups remained the same as the student population. Three parents were single parents. The seven fathers in the parent population were gainfully employed, six of the mothers in the parent population were working mothers.

The general practicum goal was to increase parental understanding of the reading program used at the target site. Parental involvement was also expected to increase as parent and child became involved in whole language activities at home. After participating in a 12 week program, 80 percent of the parent target group was expected to understand the use of whole language strategies used at the target site as measured by comparison of questions one through five on the Initial Parent Survey (Appendix C:42) and the Final Parent Survey (Appendix D:45). It was also anticipated that 80 percent of the parent target group would be able to use whole language strategies with their children as measured by comparison of questions six through ten on the Initial Parent Survey (Appendix C:42) and the Final Parent Survey (Appendix D:45).

According to Cutting (1990), when parents and teachers work together in a positive way to help children at home, the feelings of "shared responsibility" will benefit the child's progress. Therefore, the student target group was expected to show an increase in academic progress at the end of the 12 week program. Eighty percent of the student target group was expected to demonstrate 80 percent mastery on the Language Arts/Reading Skills Checklist (Appendix E:48). The checklist was teacher made and reflected those skills found in the required first grade objectives set at the county level. To show an attitudinal

aspect of the project, 80 percent of the parent and student target groups would be expected to demonstrate a high level of personal enjoyment as well as a desire to continue whole language activities at home. The measurement tool used for the parent target group included questions 11 through 13 of the final Parent Survey (Appendix D:45). The student measurement tool was a Student Survey (Appendix F:51). This survey was given orally.

CHAPTER II

Research and Solution Strategy

For the purposes of this practicum project, this writer has reviewed the following studies designed to increase parent involvement in the reading process, they include: parent communication in a whole language kindergarten class, a parent inservice training, interviews from mothers of students who attended classes using the Whole Language Approach to Reading and improving oral language skills through parental involvement. This writer also discusses a variety of strategies suggested to enhance parent involvement.

The goal of a study conducted by Bruneau, Rasinski and Shehan (1991) was to develop a parent education program concerning whole language instruction. The program was designed to inform parents of recent findings on "early literacy development" and how it can be used in the classroom. An important part of the program was to advise parents of ways they could become actively involved in their child's literacy learning. The program included a parent orientation where important components of the whole language reading program were emphasized. Student's work was on display to explain how children

learn to read in this particular program. The classroom teacher wrote to parents on a monthly basis describing current activities within the content areas. Parent-teacher conferences were held which provided an opportunity for the teacher to talk to parents about the literacy program. These conferences were held at the close of the first semester in December. Individual portfolios of each child's writing had been developed and was shared with parents at the conference. The portfolios became a basis for discussing invented spelling. In addition to the individual conferences, the teacher encouraged parents to "drop in for an informal chat." A final element of the program was a literacy letter in which the teacher described to parents how stories were read to the children using whole language techniques. Not all parents will read written communication and not all parents will attend an orientation. The results of this study emphasized the need to use a "variety of communication vehicles (group presentations, personal conferences, frequent newsletters, informal chats both in person and through telephone) to insure that parents are kept informed of classroom developments" (Bruneau, Rasinski and Shehan, 1991:124).

A parent inservice training in the Whole Language Approach for remediating elementary Chapter I students was developed by

Allen (1988). The program was designed to help parents understand whole language reading strategies used to remediate elementary students. Written and oral communication was delivered to parents concerning regularly scheduled training programs. Opportunities were provided so parents could discuss concerns both individually and collectively. Finally, parents were provided with ideas and materials that would help them understand the focus of the whole language program. Program activities included tutoring, reading stories, making learning materials and reinforcing basic skills. Parents also participated in an open house program and parent-teacher visitations to actively observe reading strategies used by the teacher. The practicum focused on 323 parent participants from five Chapter I elementary schools. The final evaluation of the program indicated that there was a significant increase in parent understanding in the areas of listening, reading , writing and speaking. Parent participants rated the inservice training as being excellent.

Rasinski (1990) conducted a study focusing on families whose children were successful but not necessarily exceptional students in kindergarten. The goal of the study was to discover parents' approaches to home literacy learning as well as their level of satisfaction with the kindergarten whole language curriculum. The

study revolved around eight mothers whose children had just completed a kindergarten program that maintained a whole language orientation. Results of the study revealed the following home-based activities. Parents read aloud to their children on a daily basis, all eight mothers reported this activity as being a "significant literacy activity." Several parents mentioned discussing the stories and pictures in a book after the book was read. Four parents took dictation from their children. A story, message, sentence or list was dictated to a parent who would in turn transcribe the child's exact words. Once the dictation was completed, the written text was read by parents and children. One parent began taking dictation from their child two years prior to kindergarten as a way to introduce journal writing. Other children showed an interest in words. To encourage this interest, parents developed oral word games involving skills such as opposites and rhyming words. This was particularly useful during long car trips. Picking out familiar words on road signs or in the grocery store was another favorite. Writing for a real purpose was mentioned as an important activity in several homes. A key writing activity was letter writing. Other home writing activities included writing messages to the teacher, making shopping lists, keeping a home journal, responding to letters

in magazines and writing to the president.

An instructional program was designed by Wright (1990) to improve oral language skills in kindergarten students. The target group included ten students who proved to have a strong need for a language development program. A Whole Language Approach combined with parent involvement was used in this instructional plan. The shared book component of the Whole Language Approach was used along with parent involvement. The parent involvement aspect of the program included an orientation and completing weekly assignments by the student with the help of parents. The program, based on the Shared Book Experience consisted of four components, they included a warm-up, old favorites, new or focus story and follow-up. Other components of whole language that were included in the program were, language experience, students' writing and modeled writing. As a result of the instructional program, using the Whole Language Approach, all ten students showed significant progress on a teacher made oral language posttest.

Parent involvement levels also increased due to this structured parent program.

Topping (1987) discusses a British reading technique called Paired Reading. The technique is designed to show parents how to tutor children in reading. A major component of Paired Reading is that the child chooses the reading material without regard to its level of difficulty. When the text becomes difficult, the child is supported by having the parent read with the child, both parent and child read all the words out loud together. When the text is within the child's capabilities, the child makes some pre-arranged nonverbal signal to tell the parent to be quiet. Much of the emphasis is on praise, self correction and signaling to read alone. Where parent involvement is very low, some teachers read the child's chosen story onto an audiotape, the child then takes the book and audiotape home. Topping (1987) reports that in the United Kingdom, use of Paired Reading by parents from English speaking ethnic minorities who are English speaking has been excellent.

In an effort to address parental concerns regarding the Whole Language Approach, Strickland and Morrow (1989) provide a scenario that clearly demonstrates how invented spelling evolves and matures while the student's ability to write is not compromised. Answers to concerns many parents have about The Whole Language Approach to Reading are discussed in this report.

Thirteen whole language projects to stimulate parent involvement are discussed by Fredricks and Rasinski (1990). Suggestions include, keeping a journal of family activities. Parents can tape record their child's favorite stories and keep the book and tape on file. Another suggestion involves children in writing or tape recording original stories for picture books. Holiday packets can be sent home that include children's games or classroom created games for individual books along with related activities. Parents can be encouraged to come to the classroom to share and talk about children's books they enjoyed while growing up. A series of whole language activities can be developed

for selected books and recorded onto videotape. The videotape can then be enjoyed by all classroom families. Parents as well as children can become involved in storytelling. Parents and children assume the role of a character in a book while other family members question the characters about events in the story. A family bulletin board can be created to display several books by one author or a collection of books on the same theme. The six steps of the writing process come into play when parents and students summarize the action of a shared book, enhance the personality of a minor character or create a new ending for a story. Another activity involves students and parents in creating an original board game based on characters and actions in a story. Finally, jackdaws are discussed. Jackdaws are artifact collections related to a particular story. For example, students and parents may want to go looking for interesting stones after reading Sylvester and the Magic Pebble. The stones can then be put on display with the book for the whole class to view.

One school using many of the parent involvement techniques suggested by Fredricks and Rasinski (1990) reports that the amount of parental involvement in the Whole Language Approach has been the reason for their school's success. The school also has a drop-in writing center run entirely by parent volunteers. The goal of the center is to help students edit, revise, illustrate and publish as many books as possible. Each year approximately 350 books are published by the school. The Buddy Books or Me Books program at this particular elementary school involves parents with students who have been paired to create books based on holiday themes. Parents work with different classes assisting student teams in designing and assembling the finished product.

This writer chose to use several components of the reviewed literature as the best solution for the practicum goal. The literature reviewed suggests programs involving parents in one 20 to 30 minute weekly project. This time frame is not adequate to give parents an understanding of the child's reading

program or to adequately involve parents in their child's literacy learning. Research supports the use of more than one short project a week to adequately involve parents in their child's literacy program. Rasinski and Fredricks (1988) offer eight principles for parent involvement. The first principle states that one precious gift parents can give to their children is their time. " As little as 20 minutes of child-parent reading interaction each evening can help children begin a lifelong reading habit" Vukelich as quoted by Rasinski and Fredricks (1988:509).

Elements of this parent involvement program included informing parents of recent findings on early literacy development, a parent orientation and using children's work to explain how children learn to read as suggested by Bruneau, Rasinski and Shehan (1991). This writer also included scheduled parent conferences as discussed by Bruneau, Rasinski and Shehan (1991). A final element from this program was the use of student portfolios to share with parents. The suggestion by Allen (1998) to have parents actively observe reading strategies used by the teacher was also utilized in this project.

Wright (1990) involved parents in an orientation as well as having parents work with their children on a weekly basis. This practicum project conducted weekly projects as described by

Wright (1990), however, each week involved a daily 15 to 20 minute whole language assignment. Unlike Wright's (1990) project, this practicum project focuses on all elements of the Whole Language Approach, not specifically on oral language.

The scenario demonstrating the evolution of invented spelling and the answers to parent concerns outlined by Strickland and Morrow (1989) was incorporated into the orientation as well as final meetings of this project. Daily activities come from the literature as well as from this writer's background knowledge of the Whole Language Approach to Reading.

CHAPTER III

Method

The parent involvement aspect of the project involved parents and students in all elements of whole language. The elements of a balanced Whole Language Program include: reading to students, shared book experiences, sustained silent reading, guided reading, individualized reading, language experience, students' writing, modeled writing, opportunities for sharing, and content area reading and writing, Butler as cited by Wright (1990). This writer implemented a 12 week parent involvement program based on the Whole Language Approach to Reading.

Human Resources utilized for the project included the parent/student target group chosen from the Parent Survey (Appendix B:36), the target site and the principal who approved any written correspondence with parents. Material resources included reading materials, writing materials and audiotapes. Reading materials and 20 audiotapes were purchased by the writer. Materials such as crayons, pencils, construction paper and writing paper was supplied at the target site.

Week one involved the parent target group in an orientation. The purpose of the orientation was to familiarize parents with the Whole Language Approach to Reading as well as to

explain this project. To begin, an Initial Parent Survey (Appendix C:42) was completed by the parent population. The results of the survey clearly indicated that the parent target group did not use or understand the Whole Language Approach to Reading. Where a "yes" answer indicates use and understanding of the Whole Language Approach to Reading and a "no" answer indicates a lack of use and understanding of the Whole Language Approach to Reading, 10 percent of the parent population responded positively, while 90 percent responded negatively to the 10 items on the Initial Parent Survey (Appendix C:42).

To set the tone for the orientation, students' writing samples, chart stories, big books and related projects were on display. Emphasis was on a major goal of whole language, that is, "whole language encourages students to take meaning from reading rather than concentrating on sounding out words" Eisle (1991:87). Any concerns about the project or the Whole Language Approach to Reading were addressed at the orientation. A major concern expressed by parents was that the whole language approach may neglect the development of important skills children need to be successful in school. The writer was able to address this concern verbally as well as by giving parents literature to aid in understanding skills development using whole language techniques. The literature distributed was Strickland and Morrow's article "Emerging Readers and Writers." Articles and

books listed in the reference section of this practicum were on display for parents to review. All ten parents in the parent target group were present at the orientation. The orientation was held in a classroom at the target site and lasted approximately one hour; 15 minutes getting acquainted and taking the Initial Parent Survey (Appendix C:42), 30 minutes lecture, 15 minutes for questions and wrap-up.

A Language Arts/Reading Checklist (Appendix E:48) was also administered to the student target group during the first and twelfth week of the practicum project. Finding time to administer the checklist was difficult, however the writer was able to obtain permission to withhold the student population from special area classes in an effort to complete both the pre and post stages of the Language Arts/Reading Checklist (Appendix E:48).

Week two through 11 involved the parent/student target group in daily activities that were completed at home. Each weekly packet was placed in a one gallon plastic ziploc bag and included daily instruction (Appendix G:53), a book, a tape of the book and a blank tape for student taping. Each week the student tape was erased and put back into the packet for the next student's use. Each weekly packet was arranged into daily activities revolving around the 10 elements of whole language as well as first grade language arts and reading skills. Skills addressed in this

project included responding to punctuation when reading, finding topic sentences and stating main ideas, recognizing reality and fantasy, becoming aware of information in books, classifying and categorizing, writing declarative and interrogative sentences and alphabetizing a list of 10 words. Typically, Monday was an introduction to the story that was used for the week's activities. Tuesday involved an oral language activity, Wednesday was a skills review. On Thursday Students and parents had a writing assignment and Friday was time to share with family members, friends or neighbors. A story map (Appendix I:76) accompanied three of the weekly packets, while the editor's checklist (Appendix J:78) was placed in all packets to assist parents and students in editing their writing.

The 10 packets were rotated within the parent/student target group on a weekly basis. Each Monday the student target group had an opportunity to share their writing, and illustration with classmates. Two students chose not to share their work. An optional assignment was to visit the library once a week.

Following week five, parents were asked to arrange a parent-teacher conference. At this time parents had an opportunity to review the project with the teacher. Individual portfolios were shared with parents which provided a basis for discussing invented spelling. Some parents still looked at invented spelling as being problematic. They also realized

invented spelling is necessary for children to get their thoughts on paper without feeling inhibited. The parent-teacher conference also allowed the writer to monitor the program.

All nine parents who attended a parent-teacher conference reported that they were on task. Four parents reported that they were having some difficulty finding time to include twenty minute daily assignments in their already busy schedules. No mid-course adjustment was necessary.

Throughout the project, parents arranged to view a whole language reading lesson in progress. Seven parents were able to view reading lessons. All seven parents remarked on how helpful the viewing was. Many parents felt that viewing the reading lesson was crucial in helping them use the techniques with their own children. It was suggested that the viewing be done at the beginning of the program and more than once if possible. Parents were invited to view more lessons if they wished. Three parents scheduled additional visits. Many parents dropped in after school for informal conferences to share their child's work and to ask questions about the program. Often two or three parents from the target group would accidentally meet and leave the classroom together sharing their experiences as well as their child's experiences with the assignments.

Parents came together once again on week twelve of the project. At this time parents handed in their Activities Log

(Appendix H:74) which was kept by each parent to record participation in the project. The parent target group also completed a Final Parent Survey (Appendix D:45) which indicated a marked improvement in the use and understanding of the Whole Language Approach to Reading. Where a "yes" answer indicates use and understanding of the Whole Language Approach to Reading and a "no" answer indicates a lack of use and understanding of the Whole Language Approach to Reading, 94 percent of the parent population responded positively while only six percent responded negatively to questions one through 10 on the Final Parent Survey (Appendix D:45). All parents in the parent target group were present for the final meeting. The consensus was that parents were thankful they had been able to participate in the study. Many of the parents suggested that more packets be made so they could continue working with whole language techniques at home.

The meeting ended with a mini workshop to show parents how they could adapt whole language techniques to any story.

CHAPTER IV

Results

The general practicum goal was to increase parental understanding of the reading program at the target site. The results obtained by this study reflect the predicted outcomes of the general practicum goal as well as the secondary goals of this study.

Objective one states that the parent target group was expected to demonstrate an understanding of the use of whole language strategies used at the target site. Table 1 summarizes the results.

Table 1

Understanding of Whole Language Strategies
Parent Target Group

	Initial Response		Total % Understanding	Final Response		Total % Understanding
ITEM	YES	NO	%	YES	NO	%
1	0	10	0	8	2	80%
2	0	10	0	9	1	90%
3	1	9	1%	10	0	100%
4	0	10	0	10	0	100%
5	1	9	1%	10	0	100%
Results	2	48	4%	47	3	94%

The data for this objective was analyzed by comparing the results of questions one through five on the Initial Parent Survey (Appendix C:42) to the results of questions one through five on the Final Parent Survey (Appendix D:45). A "yes" answer indicates an understanding of whole language strategies, and a "no" answer reflects a lack of understanding of whole language strategies used at the target site. The results shown in Table 1 indicate that parents exceeded the predicted outcome of 80 percent for this objective. Results were based on the data collected from questions one through five on the parent surveys. The parent target group was asked to complete the Initial Parent Survey (Appendix C:42) the first week of the practicum project and the Final Parent Survey the twelfth week of the project.

A second goal of the practicum project reflects how well the parent target group was able to use whole language strategies with their children. The data for this objective was analyzed by comparing the results of questions six through 10 on the Initial Parent Survey (Appendix C:42) and the Final Parent Survey (Appendix D:45). Table 2 summarizes the results of the comparison. As before, a "yes" answer indicates use of whole language strategies, a "no answer indicates a lack of use of whole language strategies. Clearly the parent target group shows more than the predicted increase in use of whole language strategies over the 12 week project. The table indicates a 20

percent increase over the predicted 80 percent.

Table 2

Use of Whole Language Strategies
Parent Target Group

	Initial Use		Total % Use	Final Response		Total % Use
ITEM	YES	NO	%	YES	NO	%
6	2	8	2%	10	0	100%
7	3	7	3%	10	0	100%
8	1	9	1%	10	0	100%
9	0	10	0	10	0	100%
10	2	8	2%	10	0	100%
Combined Results:	8	42	16%	50	0	100%

A teacher made checklist was developed to measure a third objective. The objective states that the student target group was expected to demonstrate 80 percent mastery on the Language Arts/Reading Checklist (Appendix E:48). A pretest, administered to the student population the first week of the practicum project indicated 29 percent mastery, the post test administered the twelfth week of the practicum project, indicated 81 percent mastery. This shows a 64 percent increase in mastery over the 12 week practicum project as outlined in the Language Arts/Reading Checklist Bar Graph (Appendix K:80). It is important to note that the results of the Language Arts/Reading Checklist may be unreliable as some learning may be due to actual class work.

More accurate results may have been produced if the Language Arts/Reading Checklist pretest and post test had been given to the entire class.

At the end of the 12 week study, one student scored 100 percent on the Language Arts/Reading Checklist (Appendix E:48). Two students scored below the 80 percent mastery level. Part of this problem correlates with these students' low reading level and poor language acquisition. To help correct the deficiency, these students were given remediation projects in the skills covered by item numbers one, four, eight, 10 and 14 on the checklist. The remaining seven students in the student population scored between 80 and 96 percent on the Language Arts/Reading Checklist post test.

The entire parent population showed a high level of enjoyment from the study as well as a desire to continue using whole language strategies at home with their child. This was evidenced by marks of one (highest level of enjoyment) on questions 11 through 13 on the Final Parent Survey (Appendix D:45). All 10 parents marked one on all three items.

The student target group also showed a high level of enjoyment derived from the 12 week study. All 10 participants in the student target group indicated "yes" on answers one through four of the Student Survey (Appendix F:51). The survey was given verbally in the twelfth week of the practicum project. In

response to item number four, some students felt their assignments helped them in their school work because they had practiced a skill before learning it in school. Another student remarked that his mom helped him learn better. When asked what they liked most about the assignments, the students' responses included, working with my parents, reading by myself, illustrating and sharing. The student target group reported that writing and having more homework than their classmates were among the things they liked least about the assignments.

An Activities Log (Appendix H:74) was kept by all participants in the parent population to record their participation in the practicum project. Table 3 shows a final review of the 10 Activities Logs.

Table 3

Activity Log Review
Parent Target Group

Activity	Parent Participation
Orientation	100%
Monday's Activities	100%
Tuesday's Activities	92%
Wednesday's Activities	86%
Thursday's Activities	94%
Friday's Activities	96%
Library Assignment	53%
Parent-Teacher Conference	90%
Informal Conference	90%
Final Parent Meeting	100%

The table indicates that the parent target group participated in the project at an 85 percent or higher rate in all areas with exceptions in viewing a reading lesson, (70 percent participation) and the optional library assignment (53 percent participation).

The writer has shown that educating parents in the reading program used at the target site and giving parents direct experiences using whole language techniques with their children at home has produced the predicted positive result. In addition, the student target group significantly improved in skill mastery, and both parent and child have been able to work and learn together in a positive setting, thus improving parent-student-teacher relations.

One unexpected outcome of the study was that parents came together at the final meeting not only to take the Final Parent Survey (Appendix D:45) but to share their positive feelings about the practicum project as well as how much they enjoyed working with and watching their children learn from the activities. Three mothers expressed a desire to work in the classroom on a regular basis.

CHAPTER V

Recommendations

In an effort to improve this practicum project, this writer recommends two changes. The first change involves the reading lesson viewing. The viewing should take place before the mid-course teacher-parent conference. A second recommended change is to administer the Language Arts/Reading Checklist (Appendix E:48) to the entire class. This will produce a more accurate account of skill mastery by the student population that is directly related to the practicum project.

The results of this practicum project were noticeably constructive and it will be suggested for use during the following school year for all first grade classes.

This writer has three additional recommendations to make the practicum on-going. First the practicum project will be used with kindergarten students in need of enrichment activities. Second grade teachers will suggest the activities to parents of children in need of remediation. A second recommendation to keep this project on-going involves a continuation of informal conferences with parents. Finally, additional books and accompanying weekly packets will be made available to all parents who take the time and the opportunity to become involved in their child's literacy learning.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Colleague Survey

Appendix A

COLLEAGUE SURVEY

1. How often do parents ask you about the method you use to teach reading?

_____

2. Do you feel that parents have an understanding of the "Whole Language Approach to Reading"?
YES
NO

3. Are parents concerned about their children using invented spelling?
YES
NO

4. How do you explain the "Whole Language Approach to Reading"?

_____

_____

_____

5. What is the general attitude of parents toward "The Whole Language Approach to Reading"?

_____

_____

_____

6. Would reading progress in your classroom improve significantly if parents understood and became actively involved with their children using whole language activities at home?
YES
NO

Appendix B

Parent Survey

Appendix B

Parent Survey

Dear Parents,

Please take a few minutes to complete the attached survey. The purpose of this study is to be able to help parents understand "The Whole Language Approach to Reading" as well as to actively involve parents in their child's reading progress. Your answers to the survey will be a powerful evaluation tool in this project.

When school starts in the fall, packets will be sent home. These packets will inform you about what the school's program is in reading and writing. You will learn what methods and materials are used and just how your child learns to read at our school. The study will last approximately twelve weeks where-by selected parents will have an opportunity to further their child's reading progress.

If you are interested in spending a few minutes a day to accelerate your child's reading progress, please indicate so at the bottom of this letter. If you are not interested, the completed survey is still a valuable part of this study. Please return the survey within the next ten days.

Thank you,

Your child's teacher,

_____Yes, my child and I would like to be involved in the whole language activities.

_____No, my child and I do not wish to be involved in the whole language activities.

Parent signature_____

PARENT SURVEY

1. How was reading taught when you attended elementary school?

_____

_____

_____

2. Would the same method be the best way for your child to learn to read?
   a. yes
   b. no

3. How often do you read to your child at home?
   a. every day
   b. more than three times a week
   c. less than three times a week
   d. seldom

4. Do you think there is a relationship between your child's success and the amount of time you spend reading to your child?
   a. yes
   b. no

5. Are you concerned about your child's use of invented spelling?
   a. yes
   b. no

6. How do you feel about your child's reading progress?
   a. I am satisfied
   b. I am not satisfied
   c. I am satisfied and I would like to learn how I can further my child's progress
   d. I am not satisfied and I would like to learn how I can further my child's progress
   e. other_____

_____

7. Would it be helpful to you to have a better understanding of how your child is learning to read?
   a. yes
   b. no

8. What do you see as your role in helping your child read successfully?

   _____

   _____

   Are you fulfilling this role?
   a. yes
   b. no

9. What is your definition of "The Whole Language Approach to Reading".

   _____

   _____

   _____

10. Would you be interested in working with your child's teacher using whole language materials at home to further your child's reading progress?
    a. Yes, no matter what is involved.
    b. Yes, if it does not require more than 15 minutes a day.
    c. Yes, if I do not have to come to the school.
    d. No
    e. Other_____

    _____

    _____

Appendix C

Initial Parent Survey

Appendix C

Initial Parent Survey

Questions one through five of this survey are designed to see how well you understand whole language strategies.

1. Do you know the ten elements of the Whole Language Approach to Reading? YES NO

2. Do you understand how whole language uses speaking strategies to create speaking situations for children? YES NO

3. Do you understand how whole language uses reading strategies to create enjoyment as well as learning situations for children? YES NO

4. Do you understand how whole language uses writing strategies to put children's words into print? YES NO

5. Do you understand how whole language listening strategies are used to help children listen for directions, for specific information and for enjoyment? YES NO

Questions five through ten of this survey are designed to see if you are using whole language strategies with your child at home.

6. After reading a story to your child, do you ask your child retell the story in their own words? YES NO

7. Do you involve your child in letter writing and story writing? YES NO

8. Do you take dictation from your child as a way to model writing? YES NO

9. Do you use story mapping or clustering with your child as a pre-writing activity? YES NO

10. Do you read to your child, does your child read to you daily? YES NO

Appendix D

Final Parent Survey

Appendix D

Final Parent Survey

Questions one through five of this survey are designed to see how well you understand whole language strategies.

1. Do you know the ten elements of the Whole Language Approach to Reading? YES NO

2. Do you understand how whole language uses speaking strategies to create speaking situations for children? YES NO

3. Do you understand how whole language uses reading strategies to create enjoyment as well as learning situations for children? YES NO

4. Do you understand how whole language uses writing strategies to put children's words into print? YES NO

5. Do you understand how whole language listening strategies are used to help children listen for directions, for specific information and for enjoyment? YES NO

Questions five through ten of this survey are designed to see if you are using whole language strategies with your child at home.

6. After reading a story to your child, do you ask your child retell the story in their own words? YES NO

7. Do you involve your child in letter writing and story writing? YES NO

8. Do you take dictation from your child as a way to model writing? YES NO

9. Do you use story mapping or clustering with your child as a pre-writing activity? YES NO

10. Do you read to your child, does your child read to you daily? YES NO

Use the rating scale to indicate the level of personal enjoyment you derived from this program. Circle your response to each question.

1 = Highest level of enjoyment.
4 = Lowest level of enjoyment.

11. I will continue to use whole language activities at home with my child. 1 2 3 4

12. I enjoyed using the whole language activities. 1 2 3 4

13. I enjoyed the time I spent with my child doing the whole language activities. 1 2 3 4

Appendix E

Language Arts/Reading Checklist

Appendix E

Language Arts/Reading Checklist

Use the rating scale to indicate the student's level of mastery.

1 = No evidence of skill behavior.
2 = Beginning skill behavior.
3 = Skill has been mastered.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWELVE	
_____	_____	1. The student responds to punctuation when reading.
_____	_____	2. The student is able to alphabetize a simple set of words, each beginning with a different letter of the alphabet.
_____	_____	3. The student is able to classify/categorize a group of objects.
_____	_____	4. The student finds topic sentences and states main ideas.
_____	_____	5. The student is able to predict happenings in a story based on illustrations and title clues.
_____	_____	6. The student recognizes reality and fantasy.
_____	_____	7. The student is aware of information in a book (title, author, illustrator, pages).
_____	_____	8. The student can write declarative/interrogative sentences.

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWELVE	
_____	_____	9. The student can write a narrative with a beginning, middle and an end.
_____	_____	10. The student can capitalize beginning of sentences, names of persons and the pro-noun "I".
_____	_____	11. The student can write/read language experience stories.
_____	_____	12. The student retells/summarizes story sequences.
_____	_____	13. The student is comfortable pantomiming or dramatizing stories and situations.
_____	_____	14. The student speaks and writes using complete sentences.

Appendix F

Student Survey

Appendix F

Student Survey

1. Did you enjoy doing the assignments?
   YES
   NO

2. Did you enjoy spending time with your parents?
   YES
   NO

3. Did you enjoy the stories you read?
   YES
   NO

4. Do you think the assignments made your work in school easier?
   YES
   NO
   How did the assignments help you in you in school? (Answer only if the response to question number four is YES.)

   _____

   _____

5. What did you like most about the assignments?

   _____

   _____

6. What did you like least about the assignments?

   _____

   _____

Appendix G

Weekly Packets

Appendix G

Weekly Packets

WEEK TWO

STORY TITLE: Katie Did It by Becky Bring McDaniel
STORY SUMMARY: Katie, the youngest of three children, who gets the blame for everything bad, does something good for a change.
MONDAY: Introduction
(a.) Read the book to your child.
(b.) Your child will listen to the tape while following along in the book.
(c.) Your child may wish to read the book silently and/or to a family member.
TUESDAY: Story Map
(a.) Your child will listen to the story on tape while following along in the book.
(b.) Use the story map in this packet to discuss the story with your child in terms of book title, author, illustrator, setting, characters, problem, solution. Your child may want to fill in the chart.
WEDNESDAY: Skills Review/respond to punctuation
(a.) Discuss punctuation in regard to capitalization, exclamation marks, periods, quotation marks, questions marks and comas.
(b.) Have your child tell you what each punctuation mark does, then find an example of each mark in he story.
(c.) Finally, have your child read the story using punctuation marks to guide reading.

THURSDAY: Writing

(a.) Ask your child to recall a time when they felt blamed for something. Discuss the incident.

(b.) Ask your child to write at least three sentences about the incident. Some children may choose to write more than three sentences. Help your child use the editor's checklist in this packet.

(c.) Ask your child to give their writing a title and to illustrate what is written.

FRIDAY: Sharing

(a.) Have your child read and tape the story. Listen to the tape with your child.

(b.) Have your child share their tape, writing and illustration with other family members, friends or neighbors. Sharing is optional. Some children are not comfortable sharing their work.

LIBRARY ASSIGNMENT: Have your child find a book of their own choice, they may wish to read the book silently or to others.

WEEK THREE

STORY TITLE: One Whole Doughnut, One Doughnut Hole
by Valjean McLenighan

SUMMARY: Text and illustrations introduce homophones, words that sound the same but have different meanings and often different spellings.

MONDAY: Introduction

(a.) Read the book to your child.

(b.) Your child will listen to the tape while following along in the book.

(c.) Your child may wish to read the book silently and/or to a family member.

TUESDAY: Skills Review

(a.) Re-read the story.

(b.) Discuss the word homophones and its meaning.

(c.) Discuss several homophones in the book in terms of how the words are similar/different, how the meanings are different.

(d.) Ask your child what was their favorite homophone and why? Can you think of other homophones?

WEDNESDAY: Oral Language

(a.) Recall several homophones from the book and have your child use the homophones in complete sentences. Encourage your child to be imaginative.

EXAMPLE: I see a twenty legged, two headed, purple serpent splashing in the sea!

THURSDAY: Writing

(a.) Recall some of the homophones and sentences you discussed Wednesday.

(b.) Choose one homophone and write one or two sentences using that homophone. Encourage your child to use action words (verbs) and describing words (adjectives) in the writing. You may want to help your child with this assignment. Help your child use the editor's checklist in this packet.

(c.) Ask your child to illustrate their writing. Give the writing a title.

FRIDAY: Sharing

(a.) Have your child read and tape the story. Listen to the tape with your child.

(b.) Have your child share their tape, writing and illustration with other family members, friends or neighbors. Sharing is optional. Some children are uncomfortable sharing their work.

LIBRARY ASSIGNMENT: Help your child find books about words or how words are used. Read and discuss the books together.

WEEK FOUR

STORY TITLE: Sneaky Pete by Rita Milos

Summary: Sneaky Pete proves why he's the champion of Hide and Seek.

MONDAY: Introduction

(a.) Read the book to your child.

(b.) Your child will listen to the tape while following along in the book.

(c.) Your child may wish to read the book silently and/or to a family member.

TUESDAY: Find the Main Idea

(a.) Ask your child to answer the following questions. A parent will record the answers on paper as they are dictated by the child. Encourage your child to use complete sentences. If your child makes a gross error, lead your child to the correct answer through questioning.

Who is the story about? (The story is about Pete.)

What happened in the story? (Pete was hiding.)

Where did Pete hide? (Pete was hiding in the tree house.)

When did Pete hide? (Pete hid when it was time to do the chores.)

Why did Pete hide? (Pete did not want to do chores.)

Use the five "W" questions to discover the main idea of this story. Main Idea: Pete was hiding in the tree house when it was time to do chores because he wanted to avoid work.

WEDNESDAY: Skills Review/alphabetical order

(a.) Identify and write down six sets of rhyming words from the book.

(b.) Have your child alphabetize these 12 words. If your child has difficulty, model alphabetizing using a different set of

words. You may want to work with your child on this assignment.

THURSDAY: Writing

(a.) Ask your child to recall a time they tried to avoid doing something. Have your child tell you about the incident.

(b.) Have your child write at least three sentences about their experience. Help your child use the editor's checklist in this packet. Do not correct spelling.

(c.) Ask your child to give their writing a title and to illustrate what is written.

FRIDAY: Sharing

(a.) Have your child read and tape the story. Listen to the tape with your child.

(b.) Have your child share their tape, writing and illustration with other family members, friends, or neighbors. Sharing is optional. Some children are not comfortable sharing their work.

LIBRARY ASSIGNMENT: Help your child locate books about helping others. Read and discuss these books together.

WEEK FIVE

STORY TITLE: I Love Cats by Catherine Matthias

SUMMARY: Other animals may be very nice, but cats are best ones to love.

MONDAY: Introduction

(a.) Read the book to your child.

(b.) Your child will listen to the tape while following along in the book.

(c.) Your child may wish to read the book silently and/or to a family member.

TUESDAY: Dictate a Story

(a.) Have your child dictate a story to you about their favorite animal. Transcribe the story in your child's exact words. The story should be at least two paragraphs long.

(b.) Be a model for your child by sounding out words and explaining punctuation.

(c.) Read the dictated story to your child, have your child read the dictated story with you, finally, have you child read the story alone.

WEDNESDAY: Skills Review/classification

(a.) Have your child recall animals in the story.

(b.) Have your child show the movement and make the sound of each animal in the book.

(c.) Make a classification chart. Movements can be classified as fast or slow, sounds can be classified as soft or loud. You may wish to make up your own classifications.

(d.) Ask your child to read the chart. How many animals have fast/slow movements? How many animals have loud/soft sounds? How many animals are there altogether?

THURSDAY: Writing

(a.) Ask your child to name and jot down two things they like and two things they dislike about cats.

(b.) Ask your child to write at least three sentences about cats using their list. Encourage the use of describing words (adjectives). Help your child use the editor's checklist in this packet. Do not correct spelling.

(c.) Ask your child to give their writing a title and illustrate what is written.

FRIDAY: Sharing

(a.) Have your child read and tape the story. Listen to the tape with your child.

(b.) Have your child share their tape, writing and illustration with other family members, friends, or neighbors. Sharing is optional. Some children are not comfortable sharing their work.

LIBRARY ASSIGNMENT: Help your child locate books about their favorite animal. Read and discuss the books together.

WEEK SIX

STORY TITLE: Just Like Me by Barbara J. Neasi

SUMMARY: A little girl describes all the things she and her twin sister have in common.

MONDAY: Introduction

(a.) Read the book to your child.

(b.) Your child will listen to the tape while following along in the book.

(c.) Your child may wish to read the book silently and/or to a family member.

TUESDAY: Oral Discussion

(a.) Re-read the story.

(b.) Discuss ways that Jennifer and Julie are alike/different. Ask your child which twin they would rather be like, why?

WEDNESDAY: Skills Review/brainstorming-clustering

(a.) Ask your child to name their best friend.

(b.) Use the format in the packet to record ways your child is like their best friend. Use the same format to record ways your child is different from their best friend. Use the clusters to discuss how your child is similar/different than their best friend.

(d.) What does your child like the most about their best friend? Why?

THURSDAY: Writing

(a.) Ask your child to write a letter to their best friend, use Wednesday's assignment to help with the content of the letter.

(b.) Be sure the letter includes the date, a greeting, a body, and a closing.

(c.) Help your child edit the letter, this can be done by correcting punctuation and spelling. Your child should understand that this is a published copy of the letter, the final writing stage where all mistakes are corrected.

(d.) Have your child rewrite the letter, address an envelope and send the letter. Be sure to keep a copy of the letter for sharing.

FRIDAY: Sharing

(a.) Have your child read and tape the letter. Listen to the tape with your child.

(b.) Have your child share their tape and letter with other family members, friends, or neighbors. Sharing is optional. Some children are not comfortable sharing their work.

LIBRARY ASSIGNMENT: Help your child find books relating to friends and things friends can do together. Read and discuss these books together.

WEEK SEVEN

STORY TITLE: The Color Wizard by Barbara Brenner

SUMMARY: Children will love laughing along with the magical artwork of this easy-to-read book as Wizard Gray paints his planet in every color of the rainbow.

MONDAY: Introduction

(a.) Read the book to your child.

(b.) Your child will listen to the tape while following along in the book.

(c.) Your child may wish to read the book silently and/or to a family member.

TUESDAY: Story Map

(a.) Your child will listen to the story on tape while following along in the book.

(b.) Use the story map in this packet to discuss the story with your child in terms of book title, author, illustrator, setting, characters, problem, solution. Your child may want to fill in the chart by her/himself.

WEDNESDAY: Skills Review/reality-fantasy

(a.) Have your child explain the difference between something that is real and something that is fantasy.

(b.) Ask your child if this story is reality or fantasy. Have your child point out several parts of the story that are real/fantasy. Discuss why they are real or fantasy. You may want to chart your observations. EXAMPLE:

OBSERVATION	REAL	FANTASY
The man was brown.	X	
A wizard made a unicorn.		X

THURSDAY: Writing

(a.) Ask your child to write about three things they would do if they were a wizard.

(b.) Have your child write the sentences in sequence using the words first, next and last. Help your child use the editor's checklist in this packet. Encourage your child to use describing words (adjectives)in the writing. Do not correct your child's spelling.

(c.) Have your child give their writing a title and illustrate what has been written.

FRIDAY: Sharing

(a.) Have your child read and tape the story. Listen to the tape with your child.

(b.) Have your child share their tape, writing and illustration with other family members, friends, or neighbors. Sharing in optional. Some children are not comfortable sharing their work.

LIBRARY ASSIGNMENT: Help your child locate books showing different kinds of art. Read and discuss these books together.

WEEK EIGHT

STORY TITLE: Eency Weency Spider by Joanne Oppenheim

SUMMARY: This classic children's rhyme has been expanded to include other favorite characters such as little Miss Muffet, Jack Horner and Humpty Dumpty! Join Eency Weency Spider as he travels through his day.

MONDAY: Introduction

(a.) Read the book to your child.

(b.) Your child will listen to the tape while following along in the book.

(c.) Your child may wish to read the book silently and/or to a family member.

TUESDAY: Nursery Rhyme Favorites

(a.) Help your child find the other favorite nursery rhyme characters in this book (see summary).

(b.) Recite the nursery rhymes with your child using any finger or hand motions you may recall using when you were growing up.

WEDNESDAY: Skills Review/declarative and interrogative sentences

(a.) Choose three nursery rhyme characters from the book.

(b.) Have your child dictate a declarative (telling) sentence and an interrogative (question) sentence about each character. There will be six sentences in all.

(c.) Review the sentences with your child, ask your child to read the sentences to you.

THURSDAY: Writing

(a.) Write a cinquain. A cinquain is a five stanza poem. A cinquain does not have to rhyme.

(b.) The first line of the poem will be "Spiders".

(c.) The second line of the poem will simply be two words that

describe how a spider might feel to the touch.

(d.) The third line of the poem will simply be three words that describe a spider's actions.

(e.) The fourth line of the poem will simply be four words that describe the spider's appearance.

(f.) The last line of the poem will be "Spiders". Encourage your child to close their eyes and imagine how a spider feels, acts and looks.

(g.) Ask your child to illustrate the spider they described.

FRIDAY: Sharing

(a.) Have your child read and tape the poem. Listen to the tape with your child.

(b.) Have your child share their tape, writing and illustration with other family members, friends, or neighbors. Sharing is optional. Some children are not comfortable sharing their work.

LIBRARY ASSIGNMENT Help your child locate collections of nursery rhymes. Read and discuss the books together.

WEEK NINE

STORY TITLE: Good News by Barbara Brenner

SUMMARY: Canada Goose has just laid four eggs and she can't wait to spread the news. As her message is passed from animal to animal, the facts become exaggerated.

MONDAY: Introduction

(a.) Read the book to your child.

(b.) Your child will listen to the tape while following along in the book.

(c.) Your child may wish to read the book silently and/or to a family member.

TUESDAY: Story Map

(a.) Your child will listen to the story on tape while following along in the book.

(b.) Use the story map in this packet to discuss the story with your child in terms of book title, author, illustrator, setting, characters, problem and solution. Your child may want to fill in the chart.

WEDNESDAY: Skills Review/respond to punctuation

(a.) Discuss punctuation in regard to capitalization, exclamation marks, periods, quotation marks, question marks and comas.

(b.) Have your child tell you what each punctuation mark does, then find an example of each mark in the story.

THURSDAY: Writing

(a.) Ask your child to imagine a different ending for this story.

(b.) Write at least four sentences giving the story a new ending. Encourage your child to use describing words (adjectives) in the writing. Help your child use the editors checklist in this packet.

(c.) Have your child illustrate the new ending.

FRIDAY: Sharing

(a.) Have your child read and tape the story. Listen to the tape with your child.

(b.) Have your child share their tape, writing and illustration with other family members, friends or neighbors. Sharing is optional. Some children are not comfortable sharing their work.

LIBRARY ASSIGNMENT: Locate a copy of Henny Penny and read it with your child. Discuss similarities between Henny Penny and Good News.

WEEK TEN

STORY TITLE: The Gruff Brothers by William Hooks

SUMMARY: This book uses words and pictures in a rebus framework to retell the story of The Three Billy Goats Gruff. This story has a new twist to an old favorite.

MONDAY: Introduction

(a.) Read the book to your child.

(b.) Your child will listen to the tape while following along in the book.

(c.) Your child may wish to read the book silently and/or to a family member.

TUESDAY: Oral Language

(a.) Ask your child to recall the story and to tell the story in their own words. Discuss how the ending in this story is different from the traditional version.

(b.) Encourage your child to dramatize the story by acting out the story or by using homemade puppets to retell the story.

WEDNESDAY: Skills review/verbs and adjectives

(a.) Discuss action words (verbs) and describing words (adjectives) with your child. Ask your child to locate at least 10 action words in the story. Have your child read these sentences aloud.

(c.) Ask your child to locate at least 10 describing words in the story. Read the sentences aloud.

THURSDAY: Writing

(a.) Ask your child to make three illustrations for this story. Illustration one should be about what happened first in this story. Illustration two will show what happened in the middle of the story and illustration three will show the story ending.

(b.) Have your child write one or two sentences about each illustration. Encourage the use of describing words (adjectives) in your child's writing. Help your child use the editor's checklist in this packet. Do not correct spelling.

FRIDAY: Sharing

(a.) Have your child read and tape the story. Listen to the tape with your child.

(b.) Have your child share their tape, writing and illustration with other family members, friends or neighbors. Sharing is optional. Some children are not comfortable sharing their work.

LIBRARY ASSIGNMENT: Help your child locate books discussing the habitats and behaviors of goats. Read and discuss these books together.

WEEK ELEVEN

STORY TITLE: The Rebus Bears by Seymour Reit

SUMMARY: The words and pictures in a rebus framework help your child read this version of Goldilocks and the Three Bears.

MONDAY: Introduction

(a.) Read the book to your child.

(b.) Your child will listen to the tape while following along in the book.

(c.) Your child may wish to read the book silently and/or to a family member.

TUESDAY: Oral Language

(a.) Ask your child to find ways this book is similar/different from the traditional story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears.

(b.) Help your child notice ways the writing is similar/different from most books they have been reading.

WEDNESDAY: Skills Review/alphabetical order

(a.) Have your child find 10 naming words (nouns) in the book.

(b.) Write the 10 naming words in alphabetical order. If your child has difficulty with this assignment, model alphabetizing using a different set of words, then have your child proceed with this assignment.

THURSDAY: Writing

(a.) Ask your child to recall a time when they learned a lesson similar to Goldilock's experience.

(b.) Discuss the incident and ask your child to write at least four sentences explaining what happened and what they learned. Encourage your child to use describing words (adjectives) in the writing. Help your child use the editor's checklist in this packet.

(c.) Give the writing a title and ask your child to illustrate what is written.

FRIDAY: Sharing

(a.) Have your child read and tape the story. Listen to the tape with your child.

(b.) Have your child share their tape, writing and illustration with other family members, friends or neighbors. Sharing is optional. Some children are not comfortable sharing their work.

LIBRARY ASSIGNMENT: Help your child locate collections of children's fairy tales. Read and discuss some of the selections together.

Appendix H

Activities Log

Appendix H

Activities Log

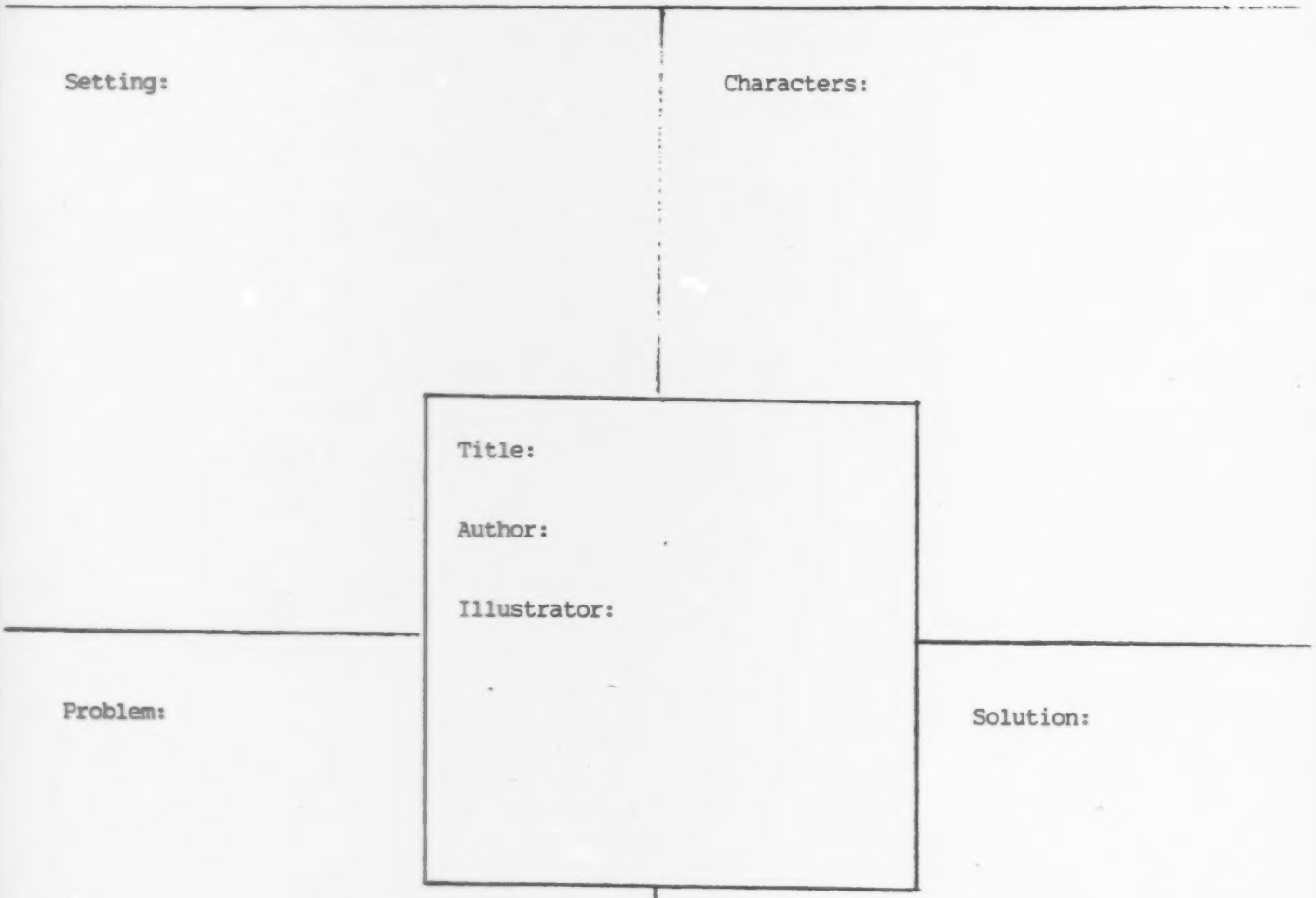
		WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE	WEEK FOUR	WEEK FIVE	WEEK SIX	WEEK SEVEN	WEEK EIGHT	WEEK NINE	WEEK TEN	WEEK ELEVEN	WEEK TWELVE
1	Orientation												
2	Monday's Activity												
3	Tuesday's Activity												
4	Wednesday's Activity												
5	Thursday's Activity												
6	Friday's Activity												
7	Library Assignment												
8	Parent-Teacher Conference												
9	Informal Conference												
10	View a Reading Lesson												

Appendix I

Story Map

Appendix I

Story Map



Appendix J

Editor's Checklist

Appendix J

Editor's Checklist

EDITOR'S CHECKLIST

Help your child review their writing for the following items.

1.	My name is on my paper.	YES	NO
2.	The date is on my paper.	YES	NO
3.	Punctuation has been checked.	YES	NO
4.	Capital letters are used at the beginning of sentences, for names of persons, and for "I".	YES	NO
5.	There is a space between every word.	YES	NO
6.	Letters are properly formed.	YES	NO

Appendix K

Language Arts/Reading Checklist
Bar Graph

Appendix K

LANGUAGE ARTS/READING CHECKLIST